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INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 004959

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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP AND DRL  
NSC FOR ABRAMS/WILDER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/30/2017  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: AIDS ACTIVIST LI DAN RELEASED, WARNED AGAINST  
HARMING CHINA'S IMAGE

REF: BEIJING 4925

Classified By: Political Internal Unit Chief Dan Kritenbrink. Reasons 1  
.4 (b/d).

11. (C) AIDS activist Li Dan was released late Friday, July 27, after spending 24 hours in detention, according to Meg Davis (protect), the American citizen founder of the NGO Asia Catalyst. Per reftel, Davis had reported on July 27 that Li Dan had gone missing on July 26. Davis told Poloff she met Li Dan on July 28 and observed that he had a black eye and cuts and scrapes on his chest, injuries Li reportedly sustained in a scuffle with Ministry of State Security (MSS) personnel as he was taken into custody on July 26. The MSS warned Li against hosting a now-cancelled August 2-3 conference in Guangzhou on AIDS litigation, saying that such a meeting would "harm China's public image" before the 2008 Olympic Games.

12. (C) Davis surmised that the conference proved too sensitive for Chinese authorities both because of its international nature as well as its focus on legal challenges facing AIDS victims in China. The Chinese guests, Davis said, including several AIDS activists and lawyers, would have offered an unflattering assessment of China's treatment of AIDS victims. Despite the conference's cancellation, Davis and Li hope to cultivate better relations with Chinese authorities in order to revive the event at some future date. According to Davis, Asia Catalyst also plans to cooperate with Li Dan on the possible opening of a legal aid center in Beijing to assist AIDS patients.  
RANDT